

**Testimony for Public Hearing
Committee on Public Health
March 20, 2018**

**Lena Arnold
50 Herbert St.
Milford, CT 06461**

**HB 5416 AN ACT CONCERNING DECEPTIVE PRACTICES OF LIMITED SERVICES
PREGNANCY CENTERS**

Representative Steinberg, Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Lena Arnold and I live in Milford. I testify in strong support of H.B. 5416 An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

As a former NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut Intern I feel I know more about the deceptive practices of crisis pregnancy centers than most, and frankly I believe that is a real problem in our society. Before I worked for NARAL, I did not know what CPCs were and neither did any of the other women in my life, all of whom were outraged upon me telling them what CPCs actually do. We have all seen the highway signs and bus bench ads advertising the services CPCs claim to provide. The problem, however, is that these deceptive organizations do not provide real medical services to women in need. All they provide is shame and religious preaching to women who are often in a time-sensitive and vulnerable situation.

This bill is about providing women with the transparency and honesty they deserve. Regardless of one's feelings on abortion, we should all be able to agree that women should have the right in our society to not be misled and to seek out the medical care they need, free from lies and deception.

CPCs in Connecticut claim to be providing an alternative to licensed medical clinics such as Planned Parenthood but in reality, many of them do not employ any medical staff at all and do not have to abide by HIPAA laws. They often situate themselves in close proximity to licensed clinics, in hopes of confusing women as they arrive for an appointment. When women go inside for what they expect to be a medical exam, instead they are made to read pamphlets and watch videos on the so-called risks of abortion, which are completely unfounded and unsupported by the medical community. Many women who unknowingly enter these centers have taken valuable time off from work and traveled long distances to deal with an unwanted pregnancy, and will have to take even more time off to find an actual clinic that can help them, something many women in this situation cannot afford to do.

These horrible deceptive practices of CPCs are things I learned in my time doing research as an intern for NARAL but as a young woman in Connecticut before my time with NARAL, I had no idea these centers did this, and I am not alone in this ignorance. This is an extremely well-kept secret and these lies and deception are contributing greatly to the war on women. Women in

Connecticut deserve the truth and these centers should be required to comply with truth in advertising standards like everyone else.

In conclusion, I strongly support H.B. 5416 to limit the deceptive advertising practices of crisis pregnancy centers in Connecticut. Regardless of personal feeling, I think it is common sense to agree that no one deserves to be deceived or lied to when seeking healthcare. Women in our state deserve honesty and I urge the committee to move forward with H.B. 5416.

Lena Arnold